

A Look at GOP's Forgettable Fifteen

A Pocket Card is



Rather than work with Democrats on bipartisan bills that are fully paid for and would help put more Americans back to work, Republicans insist on pursuing a partisan agenda. Now, they are urging Members to use a new pocket card to talk about their so-called “forgotten fifteen” jobs bills.

Unfortunately, what Republicans' bills really forgot is to create any jobs. Their “forgettable fifteen” include bills to roll back critical consumer and environmental protections that won't create jobs or boost our economy, according to economists:

Former Reagan economic advisor Bruce Bartlett: *“Evidence supporting Mr. Cantor's contention that deregulation would increase unemployment is very weak... As one can see, the number of layoffs nationwide caused by government regulation is minuscule and shows no evidence of getting worse during the Obama administration... McClatchy Newspapers canvassed small businesses, asking them if regulation was a big problem. It could find no evidence that this was the case... Academic research has also failed to find evidence that regulation is a significant factor in unemployment.”*

Macroeconomic Advisors: *“Regulation does not prevent the economy from achieving full employment. After all, the economy wasn't that much less regulated in 2007 when the unemployment rate was 4.5%, half of today's reading... The problem here is the difficulty of quantifying the productivity gain from many of the regulatory proposals... For example, we have no reliable way to measure the effects on national employment or overall productivity of preventing the EPA from tightening its regulation of dust in rural America.”*

Gus Faucher, the director of macroeconomics at Moody's Analytics: *“But in the short term, demand is weak, businesses aren't hiring, and consumers aren't spending. That's the cause of the current weakness — and Republican Senate proposals aren't going to address that in the short term... In fact, they could be harmful in the short run.”*

The report on one of the fifteen bills touted by House Republicans admits there's no analysis to support their claim that environmental regulations have hurt jobs: *“There has been no analysis of the cumulative impact of these regulations on unemployment in the United States, or on the likelihood of manufacturers to move facilities abroad to take advantage of lower energy prices and more business-friendly regulatory approaches.”* [09/15/11]

But that hasn't stopped Republicans from clinging to a partisan agenda that won't put Americans back to work. A look at the “forgettable fifteen” shows these bills won't create jobs or help our economy:

- Budget for Fiscal Year 2012 (H.Con.Res. 34): The **Republican budget would hurt job creation**, due to the deep cuts to investments in areas like infrastructure and education. It doesn't balance the budget and it ends Medicare and raises costs for seniors while protecting tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans.
- The Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act (H.R. 2018): This bill addresses the relationship between the states and the federal government in setting water quality standards and issuing clean water permits. **No jobs claims were made during the Floor debate, and no jobs analysis has been done on clean water permitting.** In fact, the House adopted the Capito amendment, which called for a jobs analysis.
- Consumer Financial Protection & Soundness Improvement Act (H.R. 1315): This bill would undermine critical consumer protections, leaving consumers and the U.S. financial system vulnerable to the risks that led to the 2008 financial crisis and resulted in **record job loss**.
- Protecting Jobs From Government Interference Act (H.R. 2587): This bill would roll back protections of middle class workers and **make it easier to ship jobs overseas**.
- Transparency in Regulatory Analysis of Impacts on the Nation Act (H.R. 2401): This bill calls for a multi-federal agency analysis of the impacts of the regulations that are already the subject of several other Republican bills. **Not only does this bill not create jobs, but Republicans have already addressed these issues in other bills.**
- Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act (H.R. 2681): The EPA is already working with the sector on implementation. **Not only will this bill not create jobs**, but the EPA estimates that when the rule is implemented it will increase productivity by preventing 130,000 days of missed work due to respiratory illness.
- The Jobs and Energy Permitting Act of 2011 (H.R. 2021): This bill calls for the issuance of Shell's air permits for OCS drilling in Alaska. EPA has **already issued** them on September 20, 2011.
- North American-Made Energy Security Act (H.R. 1938): This bill references permits for the Keystone pipeline. State Department **is expected to act on the permit in three weeks**.

Many of the “forgettable fifteen” bills are a complete waste of time and taxpayer money, as the regulations they repeal aren't even in effect yet – meaning they won't have any effect on job creation:

- The Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act (H.R. 872): This bill attempts to roll back clean water rules that are currently not in effect, **so it won't create jobs**.
- The Energy Tax Prevention Act (H.R. 910): This bill overturns portions of the Clean Air Act that the Supreme Court has affirmed could be used to regulate greenhouse gas pollution. However, there are currently no regulations proposed for utilities and factories, **so this bill would not create jobs**. The bill was opposed by the Small Business Majority, a group that represents 6 million small businesses with 43 million employees and nearly 22 million self-employed people: *“H.R. 910 ... is an affront to small businesses and only satisfies a narrow ideological agenda, no matter the consequences. This legislation is a distraction from the real challenges small business owners face and presents a threat to the millions of entrepreneurs who benefit from the Clean Air Act... Our research has continually shown that the*

Clean Air Act is good for small businesses. A report we released in October of last year found that the benefits of the law have far outweighed the costs.”

- EPA Regulatory Relief Act (H.R. 2250): This bill attempts to roll back Boiler MACT rules, which are currently not in effect **so it would not have any impact on jobs**. In addition, the bill is opposed by the boiler manufacturers due to the potential loss of manufacturing jobs: *“The ABMA urges you to vote against H. R. 2250, to let the rulemaking process within EPA go forward without Congressional interference, and to cast aside any further delaying tactics or excuses that only serve to retard growth, defer job creation and spawn confusion.”*
- Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act (H.R. 2273): The bill is yet another attempt to roll back clean air protections. However, this regulation is not currently in effect, **so no jobs would be created as a result**.
- Disapproval of FCC's Net Neutrality Regulations (H.J.Res. 37): This bill would block the FCC’s proposed Net Neutrality regulations that are widely considered a compromise that preserves the status quo of an open internet and are currently not in effect, **so it would not create jobs**.

And in touting the job-creating benefits of three of these bills, Republicans cite a study about the bills’ job creation potential that was completed in July 2010, more than eight months before the bills were introduced and that did not analyze the actual legislation in question. The study used the “worst case scenario” of permanently ending drilling in the Gulf of Mexico as their estimate of job creation, which ignores the Obama Administration’s resumption of shallow and deep water permitting after the BP oil spill:

- Putting the Gulf of Mexico Back to Work Act (H.R. 1229): Ends a non-existent moratorium on oil drilling in the Gulf of Mexico, **which will not add any jobs and actually costs taxpayers \$6 million from 2012-2016**.
- Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act (H.R. 1230): Most of the areas proposed for oil leasing in this bill are **already scheduled** to be leased by the administration this year.
- Reversing President Obama's Offshore Moratorium Act (H.R. 1231): Sets a national goal for oil and gas drilling, **which does not create jobs**, and refers to a non-existent moratorium.

Rather than wasting time rolling back critical consumer and environmental protections – many of which don’t even exist yet – it’s time for Republicans to work with Democrats on bipartisan proposals to put more Americans back to work. We can’t wait – and there’s no reason why we shouldn’t take action on the American Jobs Act, which is based on bipartisan ideas, is fully paid for, and will create jobs and help our economy now.